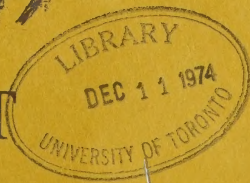


PUBLIC INFORMATION BOOKLET

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A New Direction for
TURKEY POINT
Provincial Park





Ontario

Ministry of
Natural
Resources

[General publications] [6-12],

August 2, 1974.

Our file number

Your file number

Dear Madam or Sir:

Enclosed please find a copy of the Public Information Booklet on Turkey Point Provincial Park.

The booklet highlights the park master planning process in Ontario and its application to Turkey Point Provincial Park. It also contains certain background information on the park.


If you would like to submit written comments and suggestions on any aspect of the Park's current or future development and management, please submit them on the enclosed Comment Sheet at an early date to the address below.

Mr. R. B. McGee
District Manager
Ministry of Natural Resources
5 Queensway West
Simcoe, Ontario
(519) 428:0330

Please consider this letter an invitation to take an active part in the planning and future development of Turkey Point Provincial Park. Thank-you for your interest.

Yours sincerely,

Robert B. McGee,
District Manager,
Simcoe District.



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future long term policy for the park.

Master Planning Process and the Public Participation Programme

The Ministry is seeking and encouraging public involvement throughout the planning process. The major Stages follow.

- Stage 1 Inventory of
- (a) Resource Information, e.g., ecological, biological, geological, geomorphological;
 - (b) Cultural Information, e.g., archaeological, historical;
 - (c) Visitor Information, e.g., visitor use survey

Stage 2 Establishment of Park Capabilities, Goals, Objectives and Classification

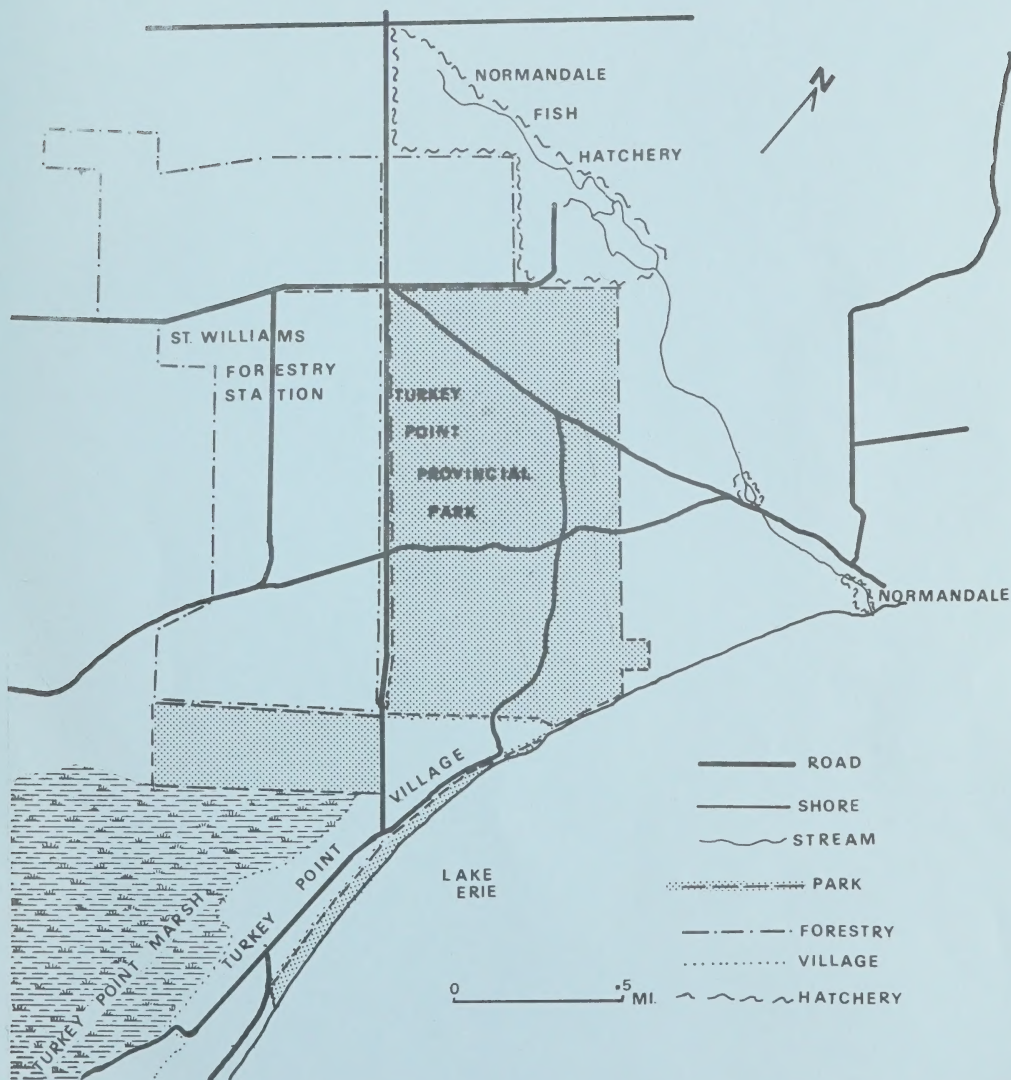
Stage 3 Development and Evaluation of Park Concept Alternatives

Stage 4 Preparation of Preliminary Master Plan

The Ministry is involved in Stage 1 at present and has prepared this booklet to aid the public participation programme. This booklet may spur written comments and suggestions and if any interest group or individual wishes to express his or her views at informal meetings, with Ministry staff, these meetings can be arranged at a mutually agreed time. Comments and suggestions should be submitted by September 9th.

Upon receipt of your suggestions and comments, the Ministry will prepare a document that will summarize these and develop a further summary of the major issues identified and a full range of possible solutions. This document will be distributed for public reaction. After evaluating your further comments

TURKEY POINT PROVINCIAL PARK AND VICINITY



COMMENT SHEET

NAME _____	ADDRESS _____
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ORGANIZATION _____ TELEPHONE NO. _____

(if applicable)

The Ministry would appreciate your comments and suggestions on anything you feel is important to the future development of the Park. If required, a map is on the reverse side of this sheet for your use.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There is no handwriting or other markings on the paper.

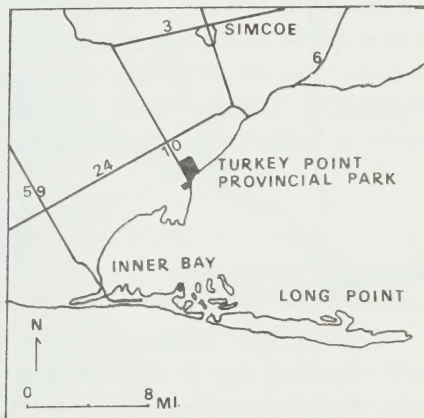
and suggestions, the Ministry will proceed to the preparation of the preliminary master plan which in turn will be made available to the public. The Ministry is looking at early 1975 for completion of this stage. Upon further public input, a final master plan will be produced.

All distribution to individuals or interest groups will be done through the Ministry mailing list. Also, copies will be available at the District and Park office to anyone upon request.

Regional Setting

Turkey Point Provincial Park is located on the north shore of Lake Erie in the Township of Delhi in the new Regional Municipality of Haldimand-Norfolk. The Point itself which is a sand spit formation, extends into Long Point Bay and together with Pottahawk Point on Long Point partially enclose the Inner Bay.

There are two other provincial parks within close proximity, Long Point and Selkirk, both of which are situated on Lake Erie. As well, the Long Point Region Conservation Authority manages a number of smaller conservation areas but these are nearly all located inland. Administratively, the three provincial parks mentioned above fall within the Simcoe District of the Ministry of Natural Resources.



Turkey Point Provincial Park is situated within easy access of many of the urban areas of Southern Ontario. Located within a two hour drive are the major cities of London, Woodstock, Kitchener-Waterloo, Brantford, Hamilton, Toronto and St. Catharines (exclusive of American cities) plus a number of other centers. Within this area, there are over 3.5 million people.

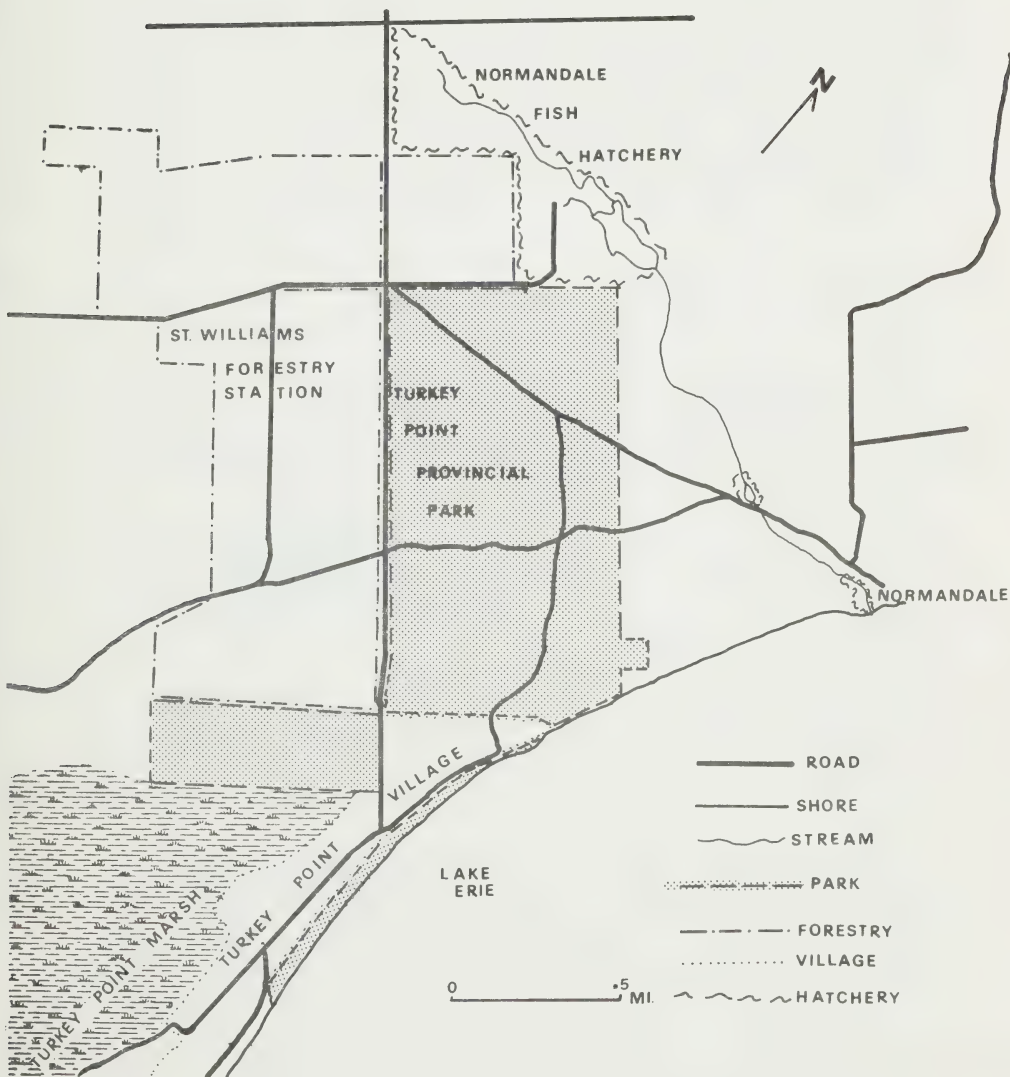
Access

General access to Turkey Point Provincial Park is provided by a number of provincial highways. Highways #6, #24, and #59 are the major north-south routes and #3 is the major east-west route. Immediate access is provided by Regional Road #10 which runs south from highway #24. There are park directional signs on highways #24 and #3. The closest major town is Simcoe which is located about 14 miles away.

Status and Description

Turkey Point became an official Provincial Park in 1959 when 778 acres were set aside from St. Williams Forestry Station. Turkey Point is classified as a Natural Environment Park under the Ontario Provincial Parks Classification System. Geographically, the Park is comprised of three distinct units. See map overleaf, page 6. Approximately 84% of the total park acreage is above the bluff while the remainder is located within the two areas below the bluff. At present, 53 acres of bog and forest are designated under the Wilderness Areas Act. This area is located below the bluff and west of Regional Road #10. The Wilderness Area was set aside by an act of legislation to preserve the area in its natural state and in particular its plant and tree species.

TURKEY POINT PROVINCIAL PARK AND VICINITY



Local Population Growth

One of the major reasons behind this planning exercise is the projected population growth of the Haldimand-Norfolk Region. This growth is based on the location of three major industrial firms in the immediate area; Hydro, Stelco and Texaco. The projected figures indicate an increase from the present 83,000 residents to 250,000 to 300,000 by the year 2000. As a result, park use, particularly day use, is bound to increase.

Park Use

Park use is mainly divided among four areas in the park; the camping area, picnic area, golf course and the beach. Day use accounts for the large majority of the Park's attendance. This is largely because of the heavy use of the beach where on warm summer weekends congestion and crowdedness are common occurrences.



Although total visitor figures are somewhat questionable due to uncontrolled access throughout the Park, the average over the last 12 years has been about 346,000 per season. Day use figures are counted by a traffic counter on the road just outside the Park office. Over the same period of time camper days (accurate) have averaged 29,300 per season. Both uses have

fluctuated over the years but the consistently high day use figures largely demonstrate the existing and potential attractive qualities of the beach area. An average over a shorter and more recent period, 1971 to 1973, shows total visitors as 502,295 and camper days as 29,500 per season respectively. Both figures indicate an increase in park use. The camper July-August occupancy rate has traditionally been lower than the provincial average occupancy rate but in recent years the Park has been filled to capacity on holiday weekends. Further, statistics collected this year show a marked increase over last.

According to park user statistics compiled in 1966 and 1971, user origins, both camper and day-user are mainly from south-western Ontario and the majority of these are within an approximate one hour's drive of the Park. No dramatic shifts were detected over this five year period but there was an increase in out-of-province visitors. A survey is being conducted this summer, 1974, as part of the master planning process and the origin data derived from this source will give the Ministry a further basis of comparison.

Park Opportunities and Facilities

The Park offers a variety of recreational opportunities and facilities. There are 390 tent and trailer sites available to the public (83 more sites are available but are closed this season to allow for regenerative growth) and these are set in a mixture of natural pine-oak forest and plantation growth. No hydro or water connections are available.

Day use focuses on the mile or so of sand beach, the picnic area and the nine hole golf course all of which are within the Park. Other attractions include the boat ramp, the children's recreation area, the sports activity field, Lookout Bluff Trail, the amphi-theater, the interpretive display area and snowmobile trails during the winter.

The Park has a visitor services staff and a visitor services programme that will help park visitors understand the natural and cultural history of the Park and generally, make their stay more enjoyable.

Other attractions immediately outside the Park include the Normandale Fish Hatchery, St. Williams Forestry Station #2, the Normandale trout pond and various private concessions in the village of Turkey Point. See map on the following page.



Geology

Turkey Point Provincial Park is underlain by sedimentary limestone of the Onondaga formation which originated in the Devonian period. This bedrock base lies beneath more than 200 feet of glacial drift which was deposited by the meltwaters of the Erie ice lobe, Wisconsin glaciation, (last major advance, circa 13,000 B.P.) into glacial Lake Whittlesey, circa 13,200 B.P. to form subsequently, the Norfolk sand plain. Further deposition occurred at a later date in glacial Lake Warren, circa 12,900 B.P. The sand plain in the Park is about 60' to 65' deep over compact till or other stratified materials.

RECREATION OPPORTUNITY AREAS



Geomorphology

Many of the topographic features in the Park are the result of the aforementioned geologic processes, e.g., the sand plain which is now far above Lake Erie's present level, the drainage pattern and the variety of soils. Other features though are the result of more recent occurrences. Small sand dunes located in the camping area were formed by severe wind erosion which followed extensive clearing for agriculture, timber and industry in the 19th century. The existing sand plain formed the parent material for these dune formations.

The present bluffs were formed by the gradual drop in lake levels and at present, the waters of Lake Erie are constantly eroding the shoreline. The high water of the last two years has aggravated this problem. The lake bluff is generally highest and steepest where the sand plain abuts the lake and in the Park it is about 75' to 100' high.

Turkey Point sand spit, below the bluff, is a creation of the erosional and depositional processes and forces of Lake Erie.

Drainage

There is only one creek running through the Park and that is located in the area west of Regional Road #10. A deep ravine on the bluff face has been formed because of the nature of the sandy soil. The Plainfield sand that underlies the Park is generally quite permeable and much of the rainfall passes through rapidly. Gullying that has occurred on the bluff face is a result of intermittent runoff.

Climate

This area experiences one of the warmest climates in Southern Ontario averaging 46°F mainly because of its geographical position. The Park has a moist climate with cold winters (Avg. 23-24°F) and long warm summers (Avg 66-67°F). The hottest months, July and August have a mean temperature of around 70°F. The fall and spring seasons have average temperatures of 49°F and 42°F respectively.

Total precipitation averages about 37 in. but varies considerably from year to year. Snowfall (65 in.) also follows this trend. Precipitation in the form of rain (31 in.) falls mostly in the spring, gradually decreases, hitting a low in August, then picks up in the fall, Temperature differs from the above fluctuating pattern by being very stable from year to year.

The effect of the lake is most pronounced for it moderates the year round temperature. The lakefront has around 155 frost free days while Simcoe several miles inland, benefits from only 135 days of frost free weather. Winters are milder here than localities immediately inland, thus the total accumulation of snow (65 in.) is less than it would normally be if it was not for the lake effect. However, snow here tends to remain on the ground longer due to the heavy forest cover. In the warmer season the air is about 5° cooler than inland areas.

Winds are light year round (4 m.p.h.). The southerly spring and summer breezes are generally less brisk than the westerly winter and fall winds. Long Point spit protects the Turkey Point beach area from many of the south-westerly winds.

Turkey Point lacks a climatic station therefore the above data are taken from the closest stations at St. Williams and Simcoe.

Archaeology

A preliminary archaeological study in the Park was completed in 1972 by Ministry staff. A total of 12 prehistoric sites and one historic site was located. Ten of the prehistoric sites are from the Archaic period while the other two are from the Middle Woodland period. All of the Archaic sites are assigned to a time period between 3500 to 300 B.C. One of the Middle Woodland sites proved to be particularly significant and was dated between 1 to 300 A.D. Recommendations were made regarding further investigations and excavations of certain of these sites. Further work in this field is required.

History

Certain historical themes have marked the development of the Turkey Point area. The following list gives these major themes, in relation to the Provincial Park, and a short comment to locate them in time, and locale.



History	Within Park	In Vicinity of Park	Comments
Indian Occupation			
Algonkian	X	X	Approx. 1000 A. D. settled
Mound Builders	X	X	Archeological Site
Neutrals	X	X	Present in Park 1650 A. D.
Mississaugas	X	X	Approx. 1700 A. D. settlement

History	Within Park	In Vicinity of Park	Comments
Loyalist Settlement Frederick Maybee Joseph Ryerse	X	X	Settled below bluff 1793 Settled Port Ryerse 1794 A.D.
Village of Charlotteville	X		Former capital London District- Turkey Point Park Museum has some artifacts of town 1795-1850's
Fort Norfolk	X		Historical cairn marks site in park
War of 1812	X	X	Raids in Area 1812-15
Normandale Furnace		X	First industry in area-famous "Van Norman" furnace-display of iron works in Eva Brook Donly Museum, Simcoe
Timber Industry	X	X	(1850-1890) Industry exhausted forest resources
Reforestation	X	X	(1908 to present) St. Williams Forestry Station-largest seeding farm in Canada
Flue-cured tobacco		X	1923 Chrysler farm site of first experiment
Normandale Fish Hatchery		X	(1915 to present) longest provincially operating fish hatchery on the north shore of Lake Erie

Turkey Point Provincial Park: Flora and Fauna

Flora:

Turkey Point Provincial Park comprises one of the most ecologically interesting and unique areas in Ontario. The floral community belongs to the

natural vegetation zone called the Niagara Hardwoods, a transition region between coniferous and deciduous forests. The park, therefore, has a broad diversity of flora with a variety of plant communities ranging from remnants of its oak-pine woodland, to pine plantations, to natural hardwood forests with a pronounced Carolinian flavour.

Unique and representative floral species are found in several portions of the park. Many of these species are natural imports from the Carolinian zone, found six or seven hundred miles to the south. These plants migrated northwards as the climate warmed in post glacial times. Typical Carolinian species prominent in the park are Black Locust, Blue Beech, species of Dogwood, Magnolia, Paw paw and Tulip trees.

This type of vegetation is due to the park's geographical position. It is one of the most southerly parks of Canada. This and its close proximity to Lake Erie create a warm and equable climate. Coupled with the well-drained sandy soil, the mild weather supports the distinctive southern flora.

The oak-pine mosaic woodland presents another uncommon and representative floral community. It provides one of the last remnants of this type of vegetation. Intermingled with the natural woodland are a variety of pine plantations (Scots, Red, White, Jack), but there are enough natural areas left to harbour most of the earlier plant species.

One of the most significant areas of the park is the Black Spruce Bog. The bog, presently protected under the Wilderness Areas Act, contains floral species that are rare. The delicate and beautiful Lady-slipper orchid can be found blooming briefly here in the spring. The area is famous for its



hybrid forms of this flower. One of these hybrids, the gold and white Landon's Lady-slipper, is unique to Turkey Point. Also, possibly the only station of bayberry in Ontario, occurs in the bog. Poison sumac, another uncommon species is prevalent there, as is the rare four-toed salamander. He makes his home in the sphagnum moss.

Along the shoreline of Lake Erie, the park possesses a long narrow strip of sandy shore. A sparse beach community of Trembling aspen, cottonwood, riverbank grape and sweet clover is scattered along the water's edge.

Adjacent to the park is the Turkey Point Marsh, a very important ecological area. The marsh is not incorporated into the park, rather it is under private ownership. The Turkey Point and nearby Long Point Marshes are important locations on the migration routes of many birds. Thousands of birds, including the renown whistling swan and Canada goose can be observed here every spring and fall. Also the American Lotus, a rare plant in Ontario, is locally abundant in the marsh.

Fauna

The diverse habitats have produced several interesting faunal sightings, however a large variety and abundance of wildlife is not present in the park because of human disturbance. In the past moose, American elk, beaver, wolf and wild turkeys inhabited the park, but presently the wildlife is composed of raccoons, grey squirrels, striped skunks, woodchucks and a sizable population of chipmunks.

The park does have a wide diversity of bird life. It is estimated that between 275 to 300 different kinds of birds probably nest or migrate through

the area. The vast selection includes the rose-breasted grosbeak, the colourful baltimore oriole, the red-eyed verio, the black-billed cookcoo, whip-poor-wills and purple martins, along with the more common species of screeching blue jays and robins.



An Historical Perspective in Understanding the Present Plantation Cover Within the Park

Turkey Point Provincial Park presents a good picture of the value and success of an effective reforestation programme. During certain periods of the 19th century local residents regarded the forest cover of the Turkey Point area as one or any of the following; an obstacle to farming, a commercial resource or a fuel needed to feed the Normandale furnace and as a result, little regard was given to forest management techniques. Today, in retrospect, we realize that this lack of foresight and the resultant chronic exploitation of the natural pine-oak forest led large areas of the Park to a state of ecological collapse with shifting sand dunes and sparse vegetation. Excellent photographs depicting these conditions can be seen in the Park interpretive display area.

The St. Williams reforestation project begun in 1908 stabilized the blowing sands and prevented the eventual erosion of certain areas within the Park from becoming a wasteland. A variety of pines was introduced in plantations and these are highly visible throughout the park.



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